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1970 JORDAN

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Jordan

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

Middle East

The Prime Minister saw the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary at No. 10 Downing Street at 1 a.m. on the morning of Friday, June 12, to discuss the situation in Jordan. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary outlined the latest reports contained in telegrams from Amman and in the JIC assessment which had been prepared earlier in the evening. He said that no decision had yet been taken on the question of evacuation of British Subjects. He did not expect there to be a decision in favour of evacuation. Contingent messages had been sent to our Embassies in certain Arab countries and also in Moscow and Paris so that if necessary action could be taken quickly to instruct them to ask the Governments to which they were accredited to appeal to all concerned to restore the situation.

The Prime Minister agreed with what was being done. He suggested that if the situation got worse the Arab Ambassadors here should be seen and should be warned of the damage to their cause if there was serious loss of foreign life and damage to foreign property.

The meeting closed with a short and inconclusive discussion of the political consequences if King Hussein were to fall.

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Before the meeting started, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary took the opportunity to mention to the Prime Minister the discussions he had had with Lord Thomson of Fleet about the Abu Musa dispute. The Prime Minister agreed with the firm line which the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary had taken with Lord Thomson.

The following were present at the meeting:
Sir Denis Greenhill, Mr. Isserlis, Mr. Tripp (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Mr. Graham (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and myself.

An.

June 12, 1970

Copied to Middle East (Gen) May 1970

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(2a) ADVANCE COPIES: MIDDLE-EAST JORDAN

P.S.
 P.S. TO C.D.L.
 PARL. UNDER-SECRETARY (MR. LUARD)
 SIR E. PECK
 MR. MAYMAN
 MR. ARTHUR
 NO. 10 DOWNING STREET (In Toon)
 DIS M.O.D.
 DOC M.O.D.
 DIO CABINET OFFICE
 HEAD OF DEFENCE DEPT. (Q).

Sir B Trend (Cab Offic)

HEAD OF NEAR EASTERN DEPT. (1)
 HEAD OF NORTH AFRICAN DEPT.
 HEAD OF ARABIAN DEPT.
 HEAD OF U.N.D.
 HEAD OF NEWS DEPT.
 HEAD OF SECURITY DEPT.
 HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS DEPT.
 HEAD OF AMERICAN DEPT.
 CONSULAR DEPT.
 EMERGENCY UNIT
 HEAD OF PUSD
 HEAD OF PERSONNEL OPS DEP.
 RESIDENT CLERK.

✓ FCO/WK. Dist

EN CLAIR
 FLASH AMMAN
 TELEGRAM NO. 266

TO F C O LONDON
 12 JUNE 1970.

UNCLASSIFIED.

MY TEL NO 264. DETAINEES:-

H.M. CONSUL AND I HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL WHERE PASSPORTS WERE BEING RETURNED TO BRITISH SUBJECTS MANY OF WHOM EXPECT TO BE ABLE TO LEAVE JORDAN BY COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS LATER TODAY. MORALE EXCELLENT AIRPORT ROAD IS REPORTED OPEN.

SIR P ADAMS

Pronto Myself,

This is the main piece of fresh news. It suggests a much better situation. I have asked F.C.O. for a situation report later today which will reach you in Hertford.

NNNN

Mr. 12/6

(3b) ADVANCE COPIES: MIDDLE-EAST JORDAN

F.S.
P.S. TO C.D.L.
PARL. UNDER-SECRETARY (MR. LUARD)
SIR E. PECK
MR. HAYMAN PUS.
MR. ARTHUR
NO. 10 DOWNING STREET (Fulton)
DIS M.O.D.
DOC M.O.D.
DIO CABINET OFFICE
HEAD OF DEFENCE DEPT (2)

Sir Bruce Trend Cabinet
Office.

HEAD OF NEAR EASTERN DEPT. (2)
HEAD OF NORTH AFRICAN DEPT.
HEAD OF ARABIAN DEPT.
HEAD OF U.N.D.
HEAD OF NEWS DEPT.
HEAD OF SECURITY DEPT.
HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS DEPT.
HEAD OF AMERICAN DEPT.
CONSULAR DEPT.
EMERGENCY UNIT
HEAD OF PUSD
HEAD OF PERSONNEL OPS DEPT
RESIDENT CLERK

Mr. Hartley

(F.C. (W.W.)

CYPHER CAT A

FLASH AMMAN

TELEGRAM NO 14

TG TEL AVIV

12 JUNE 1970.

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ADDRESSED TEL AVIV TELEGRAM NO 14 DATED 12 JUNE 1970 REPEATED
FOR INFORMATION FLASH TO FCO AND JERUSALEM.

YOUR TEL NO 11: JORDAN EVACUATION.

WE DO NOT REPEAT NOT PROPOSE TO EVACUATE BRITISH PERSONNEL
ACROSS THE BRIDGE TO-DAY. AMMAN AIRPORT IS NOW OPEN AND
COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS ARE RESUMING.

FCO PASS FLASH TO JERUSALEM

SIR P ADAMS

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- seen by Jordan
PM

PRIME MINISTER

P.A.
On.

Jordan

13/6

The following is the latest situation.

News from Amman today shows that the situation has somewhat eased. Yesterday evening King Hussein dismissed the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and the Commander of the Third Armoured Division who were thought by the Fedayeen to be the chief advocates of the hard line policy towards them and for whose dismissal they had been agitating. Our Ambassador has reported that Amman is much calmer as a result although the centre of the town is still full of Fedayeen.

The foreign nationals who were being held in two hotels were this morning set at liberty and their passports returned to them. Their morale is reported to be excellent. The road to the airport is now once again clear and some commercial flights were resuming this morning. It is therefore expected that many of the released detainees will leave Jordan today. We are arranging, in consultation with the Ambassador, to charter civilian aircraft to evacuate a number of the members of the British community and dependants of Embassy staff, to bring them to Cyprus and to fly them by RAF to the United Kingdom. It should be possible to carry this out within the next 72 hours without undue risk. A number of American and German nationals, chiefly women and children, are being evacuated by ~~civilian~~ charter aircraft today. All arrangements are under the auspices of ICRC.

We have arranged on a contingency basis in case the situation deteriorates for our Embassies in Cairo, Rabat, Jeddah, Baghdad and Rawalpindi to approach the Governments concerned to ask them to use^{all} their influence with those

/concerned

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concerned in Jordan to guarantee foreign lives and property. This arrangement could be activated very rapidly.

It is still too early to assess the probable consequences for Jordan of this crisis. But King Hussein's freedom of action both within his own country and vis à vis Israel seems likely to be greatly curtailed.

P.J.S.M.

June 12, 1970

P. J. S. Moon, Esq.

P.A.

M.

13/6

With the compliments of



THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
S.W.1

12 June, 1970

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JORDAN

News from Amman [on 12 June] shows that the situation has somewhat eased. [On the] evening [of 11 June] King Hussein dismissed the Commander in Chief of the army, [Sherif Nasser], and the Commander of the Third Armoured Division, [Sherif Zaid], who were thought by the fedayeen to be the chief advocates of the "hard line" policy towards them and for whose dismissal they had been agitating. Our Ambassador, [Sir Philip Adams], has reported that Amman is much calmer as a result, although the centre of the town is still full of fedayeen.

2. The foreign nationals who were being held in [the Intercontinental and Philadelphia] Hotels were this morning set at liberty and their passports returned to them. Their morale is reported to be excellent. The road to the airport is now once again clear, and some commercial flights were resuming this morning. It is therefore expected that many of the released detainees will leave Jordan today. We are arranging, in consultation with the Ambassador, to charter civilian aircraft to evacuate a number of members of the British community and dependents of Embassy staff, bring them to Cyprus and fly them by RAF to the UK. It should be possible to carry out this move within the next 72 hours without undue risk. A number of American and German nationals, chiefly women and children, are being evacuated by civilian charter aircraft today. All arrangements are under the auspices of ICRC.

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- 2 -

3. We have arranged on a contingency basis in case the situation deteriorates, for our Embassies in Cairo, Rabat, Jeddah, Baghdad and Rawalpindi to approach the governments concerned to ask them to use all their influence with those concerned in Jordan to guarantee foreign lives and property. This arrangement could be activated very rapidly.

4. It is still too early to assess the probable consequences for Jordan of this most recent crisis. But King Hussein's freedom of action both within his own country and vis-à-vis Israel seems likely to be greatly curtailed.

Near Eastern Department

12 June, 1970.

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PRIME MINISTER

P.A. M.

Jordan

12/6

You asked to have a report on the Jordan situation.

The latest news is most disquieting. According to a report despatched by the American Embassy in Amman at 3.00 p.m. today, the situation in the town was "falling apart". The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine has seized a number of American women as hostages; some American women have been raped by members of the Front. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office are urgently seeking confirmation of this report. They are also urgently considering what steps might be taken to protect British and other foreign nationals from acts of intimidation and violence by members of the Front and other extremist groups.

Several dozen foreign nationals, including 21 British subjects, were being held this morning as hostages by the Front in two hotels. To the best of our knowledge the Jordanian Government, which was seeking to secure their release, has not so far succeeded in doing so.

Our Ambassador reported at noon that the fedayeen were omnipresent in Amman. The police were conspicuously absent and the army had not been committed to intervention in the town. Many government departments were unmanned or inactive.

The position of King Hussein is clearly very difficult indeed. The Front have demanded that he should dismiss Sherif Nasser, the Commander in Chief of the army and his uncle, and the Commander of the Third

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Armoured Division, another relation. He may well have to face the choice between surrendering to these demands and committing the army to military action of a kind which could rapidly produce full scale civil war.

Our plans for the evacuation of the British community which numbers some 500 depend for their fulfilment on the control of the airport at Amman, and of its approaches, by friendly forces. This condition is not at present fulfilled.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office are consulting Amman and other posts about what action might be taken, e.g. through other Arab Governments, to bring pressure on the fedayeen to calm things down.

The J.I.C. are meeting and will produce a fuller assessment later.

Mr.

June 11, 1970

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P. J. S. Moon, Esq.,
10 Dr -ing Street.

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P.A.
M.

12/6

With the compliments of

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
S.W.1

J 11 June, 1970

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Princ Minister [REDACTED]
you asked to have a report on the Jordan situation
JORDAN

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7. The FCO are consulting Amman about what action might be taken, esp. through other Arab governments, to bring pressure on the Fedayeen to calm things down.

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